



Monday 26 October 2020

Dear Families and Friends of Geelong Grammar School,

Middle School Boarding Restructure

The impact and complexity of the COVID-19 pandemic has required a readiness to adapt and change as we navigate operational and logistical challenges. The upheaval of COVID-19 has also encouraged us to critique current practices and accelerate opportunities identified by our Strategic Framework. Specifically, throughout 2020 we have been required to demonstrate an energy and agility to attend to current needs, as well as explore a myriad of possibilities to prioritise contemporary practices and secure our future sustainability.

One area that the School has reviewed and engaged in broad consultation on is the structure of Middle School boarding. We have decided to consolidate our boys' boarding houses (Barrabool and Barwon) and move the location of our girls' boarding house (Connewarre). From the beginning of 2021, there will be one Middle School boys' boarding house and one Middle School girls' boarding house, with a new physical layout for each. The boys' house will occupy what is currently Barwon House, with the upstairs dormitories extending into the current Connewarre House. The girls' house will initially occupy what is currently Barrabool House but will also utilise spaces within Connewarre. The Middle School boarding house buildings provide flexibility for these spaces to evolve and reflect our strategic target of a 50:50 gender balance in Middle School boarding, which is in line with our recent shift to a 50:50 gender balance in Year 9 at Timbertop and builds on our strengths as a coeducational school.

Working collaboratively with School Council, our decision-making is the result of a thorough review of Middle School boarding and with due consideration of what is in the best interests of our community, with an emphasis on pastoral care, child safety and student wellbeing.

We will continue to provide appropriate levels of staffing and support for our Middle School boarding students, with a high level of continuity of staffing to support the transition

House Names

The arrangement of Middle School houses has changed and adapted over time in order to provide the best possible care for our students. Barrabool, Barwon and Connewarre were originally three sections within Junior House, which was established in 1914, before they became boarding houses in 1934. There have been various name changes over the years and in 1984, Connewarre became a girls' house. Our intention is to retain the names of Barrabool, Barwon and Connewarre in some way, whilst also introducing new names for the newly structured boarding houses. Throughout Term 4, we will continue the consultation process in terms of naming our new Middle School boarding houses, anticipating an exciting announcement before the close of this academic year.

Thank you

Again, thank you for your understanding and patience as we adapt to complex times and plan positively for our stronger future. As you have come to expect of us, we remain steadfastly committed to the promise of enabling exceptional learning and wellbeing environments and outcomes for our young people.

Yours sincerely,



Rebecca Cody
Principal

